

## IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 5-8 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please add new claims 11-19.

Sub D2 → --11. A liquid crystal layer as in claim 1, wherein said aligning layer is an aluminum coating of medium optical density, an aluminum coating of high optical density or a thin transparent  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  coating.

12. A liquid crystal layer as in claim 11, wherein said aligning layer is an aluminum coating with an optical density of from 1.0 to 2.0.

B1 13. A liquid crystal layer as in claim 11 wherein said aligning layer is an aluminum coating with an optical density of more than 2.0.

14. A liquid crystal layer as in claim 11 wherein said aligning layer is a thin transparent  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  coating. D

Sub D3 → 15. An aligning layer for a liquid crystal film or layer which provides homeotropic alignment, said aligning layer comprising an aluminum coating or a smooth  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  layer.

16. An aligning layer as in claim 15 which comprises an aluminum coating of medium optical density, an aluminum coating of high optical density or a thin transparent  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  coating.

17. An aligning layer as in claim 16 which comprises an aluminum layer with an optical density of from 1.0 to 2.0.

18. An aligning layer as in claim 16 which comprises an aluminum coating with an optical density of more than 2.0.